

From: metallik
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 6:19pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Regarding the proposed Microsoft settlement:

I, among many others, disagree with this settlement as being far too lenient on Microsoft. One remedy that should be enforced is the opening of Microsoft's document and networking standards to the public. Microsoft used illegal means to achieve monopolistic status on the computer desktop, and they use their proprietary office document and network authentication schemes to help maintain this status. Forcing Microsoft to open these standards (such as the exact makeup of Microsoft Word .DOC files, Excel .XLS files, SMB authentication, etc) will help promote competition, as other vendors can implement support for these standards.

Right now, business owners are almost forced to purchase MS Office products because Office file formats are the de-facto standard around the world. Otherwise, their ability to exchange information with other businesses is severely compromised. This kills competition, and benefits no one but Microsoft. By allowing open access to these de-facto file standards, other application developers can support them natively, thus promoting competition in the application industry. Competition means better quality, which may even cut down on the number of computer viruses and exploits, as Microsoft would be forced to subject their products to much better quality control (or risk losing market share).

There are other remedies I would like to see taken against Microsoft, but the above is one of the best choices. It doesn't impact Microsoft directly, nor does it require a lot of governmental oversight, but it **WOULD** greatly increase competition and prevent Microsoft from relying on proprietary standards to illegally maintain a monopoly.

Sincerely,

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